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## LATIN CLUB LUNCHEON

Twenty-first Meeting of the Latin Club—  
May 11, 1907

Professor Harry Barnes Ward, professor of Latin in Hamilton College, Clinton, N Y, will address the club at the Hotel Marlborough, Thirty-sixth Street and Broadway, New York City. Luncheon will be served promptly at 12 M. Seats will be reserved for those holding tickets (see announcement regarding tickets on p 3), others should be sure to notify THE LATIN LEAFLET, 179 Marcy Ave, Brooklyn, by postal card, if intending to be present. ATTEND TO THIS MATTER NOW.

Ticket-holders who have not yet paid their membership-fee are kindly requested to send same to the treasurer.

## METER AND RHYTHM AND THEIR RELATION TO POETRY

By H W MAGOUN

In Four Parts—Part III

After having determined some of the above points experimentally with great care, I learned that the observation that long syllables, as well as short ones, are not all alike is as old as Aristoxenus. In fact, the statements thus far made and the 4/4 schemes accompanying them involve nothing that is not clearly recognized by Classical writers. The strange feet that are made use of, are, in the last analysis, all epitritic in character, the choriambus (— ∪ ∪ ∪ I, etc.), for example, being nothing but a syncopated fourth epitrite (— ∪ ∪ ∪ or ∪ — ∪ ∪) with one resolution. Similar bars can be found in almost any extant music, new or old, which is in 4/4 time.

That music and poetry are closely related no one will deny. The Greeks, indeed, seem to have placed poetry between music and prose. The truth appears to be that poetry and music are both daughters of rhythm; for it is not impossible for a good poet to be devoid of musical ability. Rhythm he must have, and he must have it to a marked degree. Early music was certainly somewhat crude, and it is not at all certain that the rhythm of music, as we now know it, is anything more than a natural development from the rhythm of ancient verse, intoned or chanted (neither word fits exactly) with a simple primitive melody. The history of music is certainly suggestive along these lines.

The wonder in regard to poetry is that we have allowed ourselves so long to be blind to the facts. The scansion theory, which was framed to explain them, involves certain strange and even absurd propositions, such as the statement, for instance, that the Greeks never allowed a pause within a line, when their own writers state plainly that they did. The Roman grammarians also testify to the same fact. As these writers were contemporary with the phe-

nomena of which they write, it seems likely, to say the least, that they knew as much about the matter as modern scholars do. Schmidt, indeed, admits that Horace probably copied Greek originals; but he has to assume—in defense of the theory that no pauses were allowed within the lines—that this greatest of Roman poets was ignorant of the meters which he used!

That Horace was familiar with Greek originals and with Greek originals as they were sung or recited in his day, can hardly be questioned. If he was not, on what possible ground could he claim to be the pioneer (III. xxx.) in adapting lyric rhythms of the Grecian type to the Latin language? He did not lack opportunity to know them; for he studied in Athens. He did not invent them; for he himself avows that they are Greek. What more is needed?

Turning now to the Lesser Sapphic, let the two schemes be compared. If the conventional signs are used, the standard Latin form will evidently be as follows:

3/8 time.

— ∪ | — > | — † ∪ ∪ | — ∪ | ∪ | — ∪

4/4 time.

— ∪ ∪ — | ∪ ∪ — | ∪ ∪ — 2

Schmidt, indeed, preferred the ending — ∪ (for ∪ | — ∪); but the final syllable in Latin is usually long. As the final foot ordinarily needs a pause, it is clear that Schmidt's analysis is wrong here if not elsewhere.

With a fine disregard for the resulting havoc that must be wrought in the boasted equality of the bars which the scansion schemes were made to secure, many scholars not only agree that feet having the value — > are longer (cf. > above) than true trochees (— ∪), but also persist in treating caesuras and diaereses as pauses. They do so, however, in spite of Schmidt's express dictum, which is an essential part of his system. They seem somehow to be hypnotized into the belief that a dagger or a double line is a sufficient indication of the fact that a pause is involved, although neither expresses any time value. In the 4/4 scheme, the 'irritational spondee' really is somewhat longer than the preceding trochee, but it still keeps the trochaic movement which is universally felt in these two "primary" feet. The equality of the bars, however, is not in the least disturbed; for the two primary feet make a bar in perfect 4/4 time, except that the accent is "syncopated", or irregular, a thing which often occurs in music.

As the "dactyl" of the third (primary or simple) foot is commonly regarded as having a long syllable which exceeds in its time value the length of the combined shorts, the 4/4 scheme needs no apology for so representing it, and it needs none for allowing for a true caesura or pause, since the peculiar character of the long syllable is largely due to that pause.

No caesura or diaeresis can be a pause, if Schmidt's bars are to be equal; for the admission of even so slight a pause as the third of a second will

suffice to change the bars that are affected into 2/4 time. When such bars (containing pauses) are put with those other bars that have the form — >, provided it is admitted that they have an unusual length, the combination is sufficient to produce an unmistakable dilemma; for either the Schmidt-Westphal schemes must be rejected, or the conclusion is inevitable that Horace did not write poetry, but doggerel verse. The 4/4 scheme involves no such difficulty. It preserves all the essential features of the scansion scheme, allows quantity its proper due, makes room for a pause, and allows the bars to be equal throughout the line. There is no bar "a trifle longer" than the rest. The 4/4 arrangement also makes it clear why logaedics were always taken in dipodies. They had to be taken so from the very nature of the bars employed. A similar rule holds in the drama, and, when the fact is once recognized, as it must be soon, many of the investigations now going on in that field will become pertinent to a correct understanding of dramatic composition. The scansion of such lines in 3/8 time, according to modern schemes, is really preposterous.

It will be noticed that the verses cited above do not conform accurately to a single scheme. The reason is to be found in the simple fact that the rhythm of every line is modified somewhat by the needs of expression. No strain in music is sung exactly as it is written; for the "phrasing" introduces pauses and other variations, some of which are occasionally not included in the composer's thought. The bars remain essentially the same, but individual taste is always allowed a slight opportunity for exercise. The same is true of poetry, even if it is Classical poetry, and the fact should be recognized.

The first line of the Sapphic, the fifth of the Asclepiadean, and the first of the Alcaic stanza, may be regarded as normal lines. (See the examples cited above in Part III.) But what of the feet which they contain? These can be found by stripping the bars of their rhythmical elements. The results, not including the *syllaba anceps*, are as follows:

*Sapphic Minor.*

— — — — | — — — — | — — — —

*Asclepiadean Minor.*

— — | — — — — | — — — — | — — — —

*Alcaic.*

— — — — | — — — — | — — — —

The first is the analysis of the Greek metrician Hephaestion, the second is that of the Roman critic Servius, and the third is again that of Hephaestion. As the Greek admits a short syllable in the fourth place of the Sapphic, and in the first and fifth places of the Alcaic, Hephaestion recognizes the fact. In all other particulars the two schemes as here given are exactly like those which have come down to us from his pen.

The Asclepiadean he regards as antispastic ( — — — — | — — — — | — — — — ), an analysis which differs but little from that of Servius, since it represents chiefly a different arrangement of the bars, the first of which, however, admits of certain variations. As it is not necessary to suppose that the Greeks and Romans treated this form exactly alike, the analysis

of Servius may be allowed to stand. The other verses that are involved, require a longer discussion than is permissible here; but they are equally justifiable even on the basis of ancient testimony.

Where the Greek shows the possible substitution of a short for a long syllable, it does not imply that the long is regularly made short, but that the bar containing the short contains also some compensating element (such as a pause) which invariably preserves the rhythm. The short fitted the bar, or the poet would never have used it. It affected the character of the foot; but the rhythm remained intact.

Here, then, are three or more meters which are based on rhythm. The feet are not equal; for they cannot be, since they omit the rhythmical elements of the bars. The feet simply stand for the common features of the lines. They are a composite photograph, so to speak, which loses sight of all the individual characteristics of those lines and simply supplies a conventional standard by which to measure them. What is there that is illogical in such a standard? It preserves the true bar divisions, indicates clearly the feet regularly contained in them, and is not subversive of the fundamental metrical structure of the lines. Is this method of procedure inferior to or more misleading than the scansion system?

In my own experience, students not yet sophisticated by scansion tended naturally, in their reading, to rhythmical renderings such as those given above; and they did this just about in proportion to their rhythmical capacity as determined from other sources, such as ability to write metrical compositions, etc. They made use of balancing pauses and of vanishing final consonants, and I am satisfied that I had been doing the same thing myself long before the time beats revealed the fact. Such matters tend to escape all but the keenest of trained ears; but they must be observed and allowed for, if accurate or better results are ever to be obtained.

A point remains which should not be passed over. The present schemes are in 3/8 time, supposedly the quickest time known to music, ancient or modern. It represents the movement of the waltz and the jig, although a slow waltz may be in 3/4 time. What does Horace mean, then, by calling his iambics "swift"? On his own authority, they could not have been in 3/8 time, since he allows two feet to a bar. This would demand at the very least a 6/8 movement; and yet in his odes he speaks of his iambics as swift. If the odes were in 3/8 time, as has been taught, they themselves ought to be called swift rather than the iambics, since the speed effect of 3/8 time should be about twice as great as that of 6/8.

How can logaedics, if they are in 3/8 time, be slower than iambics in 6/8 time? And yet what else can Horace imply on the scansion basis? But this is not all. The word logaedic means, as now interpreted, 'prose-song', a song that resembles prose. How can a song resemble prose and maintain a movement suitable for a waltz or, worse yet, for a jig? Is there anything prose-like in a waltz? Is there in a jig? Can a 3/8 movement be produced which will not suggest one or the other, if the schemes are followed?

Strangely enough a significant fact has escaped the notice of modern scholars, although it was well understood by the ancients. No natural reading in 3/8 time is possible in English or in any other verse, unless the language expresses scorn or intense emotion. When scorn is to be expressed, the movement

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